

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 8, 2005

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice Chairman
Ginny Russell, Selectman Representative
John Kane, Precinct Representative
Pat Collins
Maury Friedman
William Lally
Jack Lessard
Richard Nichols
Michael Pierce
Charlie Preston

Excused

Russ Bernstein

Unexcused

Dick Hansen
Eileen Latimer

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Budget Committee

Approval of Minutes – October 18, 2005

Moved by Mr. Lessard, seconded by Mr. Collins, to approve the Minutes of October 18, 2005.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Woolsey introduced Town Counsel Mark Gearreald, who had been invited to explain the recent court rulings regarding Special Revenue Funds. She asked Attorney Gearreald whether there would be a risk to town services if Special Revenue Funds were voted down by Town Meeting without having the necessary funds included in the operating budget. She stated that she felt this pertained only to Police Private Details, Fire EMS, and Recreation Funds, since they were different from the others.

Attorney Gearreald explained that after the last Town Meeting had voted to not authorize expenditures from the Private Detail SRF, the Town had stopped using Hampton Police for the details. The Police Union filed a Motion to Dismiss that action on the basis that Special Revenue Funds are not covered by the provisions of RSA 32, which precludes spending funds from other sources for purposes which are defeated in warrant articles. The judge ruled that, once an SRF is established, it is not necessary to present a warrant article each year to authorize expenditures from that SRF, as long as the revenues are expended for purposes related to that fund. He further

explained that this pertained to all SRFs since they were identical in structure and purpose, even if they supported different activities.

Chairman Woolsey asked what would happen if the voters again turned down any of the SRF warrant articles. Attorney Gearreald stated that it is unlikely that any such articles would appear in the future since the judge's ruling was final, thus making them unnecessary. A warrant article would only be required if any surplus funds were going to be spent for a non-related purpose.

Chairman Woolsey initiated the work session and told the Committee that the final vote on these items would be taken at the December 6th meeting.

Town Clerk

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Town Clerk	\$185,316
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Town Clerk Arlene Andreozzi.

Ms. Andreozzi said that the budget is up a bit this year because it was cut drastically the last two years. Increases are for salaries and computer support. All other items are approximately the same. Mr. Plouffe asked if there was in-house IT. Ms. Andreozzi replied that there was.

Mr. Nichols asked for justification for 14.5% increase in wages. Ms. Andreozzi replied that a deputy is leaving this year and a new employee is being trained as a replacement.

Tax Collection

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Tax Collection	\$88,606
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Joyce Sheehan, Tax Collector. Chairman Woolsey noted that the budget shows a change of zero. Ms. Sheehan said that the tax bills went out a week ago and over \$1 million has been collected so far.

Assessing

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Assessing	\$202,080
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Bob Estes, Assessing Officer. Mr. Estes said that there is basically no increase in this budget except for salaries. He said that Remeasure/Relist has been recommended to the CIP.

Building & Code Inspection

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Building & Code Inspection	\$213,333
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Kevin Schultz, Building Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Schultz said the budget is up 12.9% and this reflects the addition of a part-time inspector.

Conservation

Moved by Ms. Russell seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Conservation	\$3,601
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Library

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Library	\$736,385
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Catherine Redden of the Lane Memorial Library and Bob Frese, Library Trustee. Ms. Redden said that they were determined to bring in a budget at the same level as last year's. The part-time youth services position will go to full time. In order to fund this change, trimming was done in other parts of the budget.

Mosquito Control

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Mosquito Control	\$80,525
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Ann Kaiser. Ms. Kaiser said increase in the budget is due to "adulticiding".

Recreation & Parks

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Recreation & Parks	\$254,966
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Dyana Martin, Recreation & Parks Director. Mr. Pierce asked if any items have been removed from the budget that will be presented as warrant articles. Ms. Martin said that several items will be presented as warrant articles. Mr. Friedman asked when the Committee would see these. Chairman Woolsey replied that the Selectmen would present them on January 10. Mr. Preston asked about paving on Ashworth Avenue. Ms. Martin said there will be a warrant article for that.

Parking Administration

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Parking Administration	\$62,595
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Mr. Lally asked if there is someone to collect money in the parking lot in back of the casino. Ms. Martin replied that there was.

Welfare

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following”

Welfare	\$110,845
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Chairman Woolsey introduced James Barrington, Town Manager, and Maureen Duffy, Administrative Assistant. Chairman Woolsey asked if there was any feedback from the state regarding potential utilities assistance for communities. Ms. Duffy said this is not known at this time, but there will probably be a lot of activity with people asking for assistance. Ms. Russell said that if anyone should require such assistance, they should call Rockingham Community Action at 431-2911.

Ms. Russell also reminded viewers to take advantage of the exemptions on their tax bills for the elderly, veterans and the disabled.

Mr. Barrington said letters were sent to the health agencies asking them if they wanted to file a request. A handful replied. It was decided not to include these in the budget. These agencies can file a petitioned warrant article if they so wish.

Mr. Collins said that he felt the continual shifting of items to warrant articles is confusing and he is uncomfortable with that. He said it seems to be the trend.

Cemeteries

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Cemeteries	\$95,477
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Chairman Woolsey introduced Mr. Kenny, Cemetery Director, and Mr. Shaw and Mr. Bateman, Cemetery Trustees.

Mr. Kenny said that operation of the Hampton cemeteries is done on less money than other cemeteries of the same size. Also the cemetery is the only one of its size with only one employee.

Office of Planning

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Office of Planning	\$105,439
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Mr. Barrington introduced the new planner, Jimmy Stefan. Mr. Stefan said there were very few changes from the 2005 budget. Some line items were reduced so that the department can afford to hire a part-time planning secretary.

Legal

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Legal	\$203,078
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Regarding a possible source of income, Attorney Gearreald said that condo conversions have increased. These should be reviewed independently and a charge required for this. The Planning Board would have to require that this be done.

Management Information Systems

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Management Information Systems	\$79,580
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Mr. Barrington commended Mr. Paul Paquette for his great work in keeping the system together and operational.

Executive

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Executive	\$126,459
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Election Administration

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Election Administration	\$30,731
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Accounting & Financial

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Accounting & Financial	\$325,128
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Human Resources

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Human Resources	\$5,000
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Personnel Administration

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Personnel Administration	\$1,933,196
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Mr. Barrington said that the majority of increase in this budget is due to retirement.

Planning

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Planning	\$30,104
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Zoning

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Zoning	\$8,461
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Town Office Building

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Town Office Building	\$103,910
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Mr. Barrington said that some roof repairs are anticipated.

District Court

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

District Court	\$19,066
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Municipal Insurance

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Municipal Insurance	\$2,763,711
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Total General Government

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Total General Government	\$6,354,522
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Mr. Nichols said that the Town is paying 90% of health insurance for employees while most private sector companies are paying only 70%. Mr. Barrington said that the Town is currently in negotiations with the unions and insurance is an issue.

Debt Service

Moved by Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the following:

Debt Service	\$3,302,207
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Mr. Barrington said this item is down this year due to refinancing.

Chairman Woolsey reminded the Committee that the next meeting will be on Thursday, November 10, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Public Works will be addressed at that time.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Collins **moved**, seconded by Chairman Woolsey, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman